

Message

From: Sloly, Peter [/O=OCRPS/OU=EXTERNAL (FYDIBOHF25SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=C7A9E877A2634770A6F1452356237C7E]
Sent: 2/2/2022 12:04:28 AM
To: Maloney, Kevin [maloneyk@ottawapolice.ca]; Fortunato, Maria [fortunatom@ottawapolice.ca]
Subject: FW: Regarding this past weekend

Unclassified

For your review and response...thank you

ps

Peter Sloly

Chief of Police /Chef de police

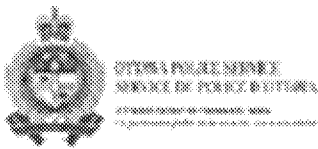
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From: Lechleitner, Reinhard <LechleitnerR@ottawapolice.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, February 01, 2022 3:36 PM
To: Sloly, Peter <SlolyP@ottawapolice.ca>; mskof@ottawapa.ca
Subject: Regarding this past weekend
Unclassified

Good afternoon,

I will start by promising to keep this as concise and straightforward as possible as I recognize and expect that there is a massive amount of communication in all forms occurring at the present time, along with everything that has already been brought forward over the last 4-5 days. I simply wish to express my frustration, anger, embarrassment and disappointment that was the recent 3 day weekend. And I wish to do so without layers of supervisory or management watering down given that it appears to me that our immediate supervisory and management levels were not being listened to anyway.

I want to further qualify my sense regarding the events of the weekend in that I have no desire to belittle or blame anyone in particular for the hot mess frontline officers and NCRCC were faced with from the minute the travelling circus reached our city. As with all large events, there is ample room for chaos and mayhem, no matter how well planned the event might be and no matter who the planner or planners are.

That being said, I am disappointed that this Service did not see this coming and only began preparations 1 week ago. Meanwhile, it was evident from the early brewings of the convoy, that a significant event was certain to impact on our streets on the noted weekend. The only steps taken to bolster our numbers were to cancel reserve staffing (as expected) and have various POU/ESU in attendance. Given the sparse and ineffectual deployment of ESU/POU in some of our past events, I was not surprised that this is what occurred over the weekend given the highly politicized nature of the demonstration. Furthermore, this minimal staffing plan was put into effect even though it looked and felt like a Canada Day level event from the first few days of the protest's media coverage. The roiling undercurrent of misfits beneath the

surface of the general face of the protest left me feeling uncomfortable about their presence and intentions in our city. I can only assume that this discomfort was not felt at other levels of our organization.

My anger, embarrassment and frustration stem from so many points that I'm at a loss to list them all so I will bring up only the most glaring ones relating to staffing/officer safety and public safety.

Sending an email for overtime the weekend of the demonstration is a far less effective means of bolstering staffing than it appears. Actually, it's ridiculous. I cite as an example from this past summer an impaired driver involved incident where we required 3 paid duty officers for traffic control at a major intersection. We controlled that intersection for 24 hours. No officers took the paid duty and patrol was left to deal with the issue. This is not an uncommon occurrence. The lack of staffing and ESU deployment for a Canada Day level event left the crowds to mill about, getting intoxicated to whichever level they desired, deface monuments, and intimidate the citizens and business people in the downtown core since there were simply not enough officers to do any proactive patrols nor to respond to any type of threatening or intimidating behaviour. Possibly even more egregious than this was the placing of city employees directly in harm's way by having heavy trucks and equipment deployed without any police co-located with them. Again, there just were not enough officers deployable for this task. Numerous times over the weekend we were left scrambling to have officers respond to locations where heavy equipment operators were being assaulted and having their machines climbed on by extremely belligerent protesters. This included an incident immediately at the beginning of my Saturday night shift where we responded to city workers being pushed and intimidated by protesters at Rideau St and Dalhousie St. I later learned ESU had completed their shift at 2000hrs. These protesters wound their way westwards causing further incidents all along our perimeter as they went moving along with impunity. This was not a peaceful demonstration nor did I ever expect it to be.

Further concern should be mentioned regarding the placement of a hand full of officers at posts by themselves along the Wellington St epicentre. This was our Friday night shift which ended in 5 hours of solo work with no or possibly limited back up available. The availability of officers to respond to other officers needing assistance was near non-existent. Even when we had more officers earlier on in the night, many times officers had no choice but to abandon locations in order to assist others who were being overwhelmed.

With the lack of a proactive presence, the mobile nature of the protest's passenger vehicle segment, and the alcohol fueled crowds, it is likely that the amount of impaired drivers in the downtown core increased ten-fold given that there was little to no enforcement action that would occur. This posed an increased risk to the officers at their posts as these vehicles circled the area not to mention the danger posed to the general public and other protestors.

The panicked look in an officers face while at the Dalhousie and Rideau incident, the exhausted faces of officers trying to complete extended shifts and multiple days of overtime while dealing with stressful and volatile situations. The threat of burnout for many is real and that's assuming they have not brought as much policing baggage into this debacle as I have. But the anger, frustration and embarrassment is also real and fully justified given our first hand experiences. "Big picture" ideals hold no meaning or importance given the lack of justification for what we experienced this weekend. Frankly, I am unsure if I am ashamed on behalf of this Service or for being in it – maybe both. The entire experience has left me emotionally raw. As always, I will find a way forward and carry on, the same as the vast majority of my fellow officers. My family, my bedrock, has always been there for me during difficult times, as have a core group of first responders dealing with similar frustrations and emotions in their respective workplaces.

On a related but positive note, I would like to commend the OPP, what with their own staffing problems, for lending us the officers that they could spare to bolster our numbers on Sunday night. It's no small feat and did not go unnoticed. Also, I would like to recommend that the police service recognize, perhaps at the next PSB meeting, how the businesses in the downtown core and area offered us washroom facilities, food, water, and accommodations (if needed) all the while doing a very stringent job of triaging incidents in order to not 'bother' the police too much during this trying time. For your consideration.

regards,
Reinhard